



2021 Fall Conference and Annual Meeting declared successful!

After nearly two years of not being able to meet in person, we were finally able to have an in-person conference this past October. A huge thank you goes out to our hosts in Midland for providing such a great space – a practical environment with plenty of hands-on opportunities for our techies and actors. In addition, a great big thank you goes to our Education Committee who found five great, knowledgeable, and experienced instructors to lead our classes, all who had decades of experience in their field.

From Stagecrafters in Royal Oak we had **Alan Semonian** and **Rodel Salazar** leading two of our classes. Alan held a highly educational and pertinent administration class on evaluating your income streams and helping you analyze and manage your organization's financial needs and goals. Rodel led a highly popular directing class to help provide prospective (and veteran) directors a roadmap to putting on a successful production from pre-planning all the way through performances.

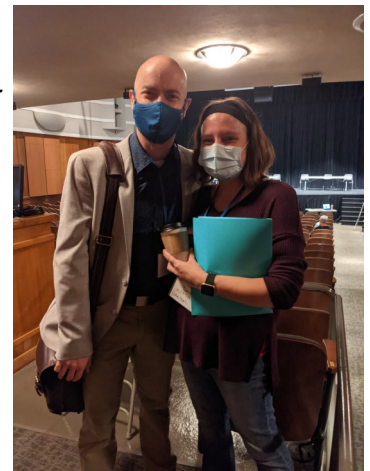
From Saginaw Valley State we had their Assistant Professor of Theatre **Tommy Wedge** lead our youth theatre class on preparing for auditions, which anyone could attend and did! He



Above, the Board participated as panelists in a Town Hall meeting about getting restarted with live performances for our patrons. Below are one of our workshop leaders, Tommy Wedge, with one of our gracious hosts from Midland, Melissa Bornemann.

provided invaluable tips on fine-tuning your audition songs to showcase your range as well as how to break down a monologue to maximize your potential and help you make strong, big choices to slay in your auditions.

Additionally, for our regular acting class we had the venerable **Bill Anderson** from Grand Rapids Civic Theatre instruct us on acting through song and musical performance. This highly attended class supplemented the youth theatre class,



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**Community Theatre
Association of Michigan**

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Callboard

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This is the official newsletter of the Community Theatre Association of Michigan, issued monthly to all group affiliates and individual members with e-mail addresses on record. Distribution is by e-mail with a link to the newsletter on the association website. Back issues are available on the association website. Correspondence to the **Callboard** should be sent to maryloubritton@gmail.com. Updated e-mail and postal addresses are maintained by the Administrator and should be sent to CTAMthrives@gmail.com.



Above, last year's (2020!) Volunteer Spirit Award was finally presented to CTAM webmaster and all-around princely guy, Chuck Goddeeris! Board member Ruthann Liagre made the presentation!



CTAM Administrator Mary Jo Denolf made a much-delayed 2020 Dorothy Arnett Volunteer Service Award presentation to CTAM-stalwart Larry Nielsen from Twin City Players. Larry has been a very active member of Twin City Players for more than 40 years as an actor, director, and Board member. He has also served many roles with CTAM during that time — currently as the Adjudication Chair.



More from our Fall Conference

(continued from Page 1)

as it focused on the musical component of acting. In this class our actors added to their toolbox of skills by learning how to effectively tell a story in each song; they analyzed performances, applied the tools and got direct feedback in the class.

Lastly, our techies were able to learn more about the art of projections from Central Michigan University professor Paul Collins. He demonstrated multiple techniques on how to use projections to enhance your production and make it more dynamic and walked attendees through the ins and outs of various software and hardware to help you accomplish these goals.

These classes were just the first step in resuming in-person classes and are merely a tip of the iceberg of what our Education Committee can accomplish. All these classes were very well received and many of these instructors will be asked to lead future Summer Master Classes.

But before we get to experience those in-depth classes, we must first go On The Road for the Spring Conference. Every other Spring we offer five classes, one in each of our core areas, and take the same set of classes to three locations throughout the state so it's easier for everyone to attend. We know not everyone can make it to one location, especially in the not so warm months in Michigan, so be on the lookout to see announcements on our Spring Classes very soon.

Many thanks to Midland for hosting the annual gathering and to CTAM Board Member J. R. Bornemann for making the arrangements for our meeting. Job well done!



Unable to attend the Conference, Marcus Chapman received the Volunteer Spirit Award from the Board for his brilliant contributions to the CTAM Marketing efforts.



Above right, Playwriting Co-Chair Pat Paveglio presents this year's second place award to David Durham from Rosedale Players.

Below left, CTAM President Michael Wilson and CTAM Administrator Mary Jo Denolf get ready for the Annual Meeting to start.

Below right, Alan Semonion from Stagecrafters talked about their efforts to maintain the income stream coming out of the COVID shutdown.



CTAM Membership Update

CTAM is in the middle of a concerted effort to rebuild our membership after the decimation of the pandemic — not only on our affiliate members, but also CTAM itself! We are pleased to report that we now have 40 affiliates currently and are working on connecting with others.

- Alpena Civic
- Audio Air Force
- Avon Players, Rochester
- Bay City Players
- Beckwith Theatre Company
- Center Stage - Kalamazoo
- Clarkston Village Players
- Clio Cast & Crew
- Community Theatre of Howell
- Farmington Players
- Fenton Village Players
- Flint Community Players
- Fowlerville Community Theatre
- Glen Arbor Players
- Grand Rapids Civic Theatre
- Grosse Pointe Theatre
- Holland Civic Theatre
- Kalamazoo Civic Theatre
- Lebowsky Center for Performing Arts, Owosso
- Little Traverse Civic Theatre
- Manistee Civic Theatre
- Midland Center for the Arts
- Monroe Community Theatre
- Muskegon Civic Theatre
- Northern Lites Readers Theatre, Cadillac
- Old Town Playhouse
- Pinckney Players
- Pit & Balcony Community Theatre
- Players de Noc, Escanaba
- Players Guild of Dearborn
- Pontiac Theatre IV
- Port Austin Community Players
- Rosedale Community Players, Southfield
- Spotlight Players, Plymouth
- Stagecrafters, Royal Oak
- Tawas Bay Players
- The Sauk, Jonesville
- Thornapple Community Players, Hastings
- Tin Shop Theatre
- Twin City Players, St. Joseph
- WE Players, East Tawas

The following are former affiliates over the past several years who have not yet renewed. If you are involved with any of these groups or have infor-

mation that would help us get them signed up, please contact CTAM Administrator Mary Jo Denolf at ctamthrives@gmail.com.

Algonac Community Theatre
Allegan Community Players
Ann Arbor Civic Theatre
Barn Swallow Theatre - Cassopolis
Box Factory Theatre Company - St. Joseph
Cadillac Footliters
Caledonia Community Players
Calumet Players
Cedar Springs Community Players
Center Stage Jackson
Central Park Players - Grand Haven
Dickinson County Comm. Theatre - Kingsford
Dogwood Community Players - Fremont
DYPAC Trenton Theatre
Flat River Comm Players - Greenville
Gaylord Community Productions - Gaylord
Gladwin Area Friends of the Theatre
Hartland Players
Heart of the Hills Players - Clinton Township
Ionia Community Theatre
Lakeland Players - Waterford
Lapeer Community Theatre
Lion Heart Productions - Grant
Marshall Civic Players
Master Arts Theatre - Grand Rapids
Northland Players - Cheboygan
Our Town Players - South Haven MI
Peninsula Arts - Vista Theatre - Negaunee
Port Austin Community Players
Port Huron Civic Theatre
Richmond Community Players
Ridgedale Players - Troy
Riverwalk Theatre - Lansing
Rogers City Comm Theatre - Rogers City
Saint Clair Theatre Guild
Saline Area Players
Shoreline Players
Southgate Community Players
St. Dunstan's Theatre Guild - Birmingham
STAGE-M, Big Rapids
Standing Room Only Theatre Group - Bay City
Downeaster Theatre - Lansing
Livingston Players - Brighton
Park Players - Detroit
Phoenix Players - Brighton
Village Players - Birmingham
Thebes Players - Lowell
Thornapple Players - Hastings
Three Rivers Community Players
Thumb Area Community Theatre - Sebawaing
Wyandotte Community Theatre



The Sauk and Ed Asner

The Sauk, the community theatre serving Jonesville, MI, was contacted by Liza Asner, Ed's daughter and tour manager, in early 2020 as a theatre of interest for Mr. Asner to perform. "We were given two show options and quickly selected his one-man show, *A Man and His Prostate*. We set dates (April 6 and 7, 2022) and tickets went on sale. We had sold nearly \$6,000 in tickets when the Stay at Home order took effect. We delayed until the fall. Obviously, the situation continues to be unsteady and, given our schedule and the hopes that the world would be better, we delayed until October 28 and 29, 2021. Then, suddenly, at home in his bed, Mr. Asner passed away on August 29," explains Executive Director Trinity Bird.

Mr. Asner is acting royalty. The most awarded male television actor of all-time is perhaps best known for playing Lou Grant on "The Mary Tyler Moore Show" and, later, "Lou Grant." We had learned that multiple generations know his work. Younger people knew him as Santa in "Elf," Carl in "Up," and most recently, as Johnny's stepfather on "Cobra Kai."

"We had sold nearly \$8,000 in tickets and were looking to make a profit of about that amount, once all was said and done. Our patrons, as they always do, have really come through to support us. We have only - to date - refunded \$925 in tickets. These generous patrons have donated back just under \$6,000 to the theatre.

"I tell you all this because it really shows how our community continues to rally around our theatre...both during the pandemic and before. We have always been taken care of and encouraged by our community. The community in 'community theatre' is the best part of what we all do," Bird continued.



Accreditation and Playwriting Awards presented at Annual Meeting

Accreditation is one of the least-known benefits of CTAM membership, but one of the most prestigious ones we offer. Simply explained, individual members are credited for attending CTAM-sponsored or approved educational activities. After attaining specific levels, awards are presented annually at the Fall Conference.

This year's presentations were as follows:

- Bonnie Grooters, 25 hours
- Stacy Parrot, 25 hours
- Ben Zylman, 25 hours
- Larry Nielsen, 150 hours
- Betsy Willis, 150 hours
- Jill Patchin, 150 hours
- Mary Lou Britton, 250 hours
- Joanne Berry, 450 hours



Long-standing member and Callboard Editor Mary Lou Britton received her certificate for 250 hours of CTAM education.

The Annual **Playwriting** awards were also presented at the Annual Meeting, as follows:

1st Place - *Love Among Mortals*

Maripat Allen, Manistee
Manistee Civic Players

2nd Place - *Back to the Brazen Hussy*

Dave Durham, Garden City
Rosedale Community Players

Honorable Mention - *Three on a Match*

Art Nemitz, Portage
Kalamazoo Civic

What's coming up in Michigan theatre?

Bay City Players	<i>Ten November</i>	Nov 5-14, 2021
Clarkston Village Players	<i>Bus Stop</i>	Nov 5-20, 2021
Community Theatre of Howell	<i>Bonnie & Clyde, the Musical</i>	Nov 5-14, 2021
The Sauk, Jonesville	<i>Shakespeare 101 (Pigeon Creek Shakespeare)</i>	Nov 6, 2021
Little Traverse Civic Theatre	<i>Steel Magnolias</i>	Nov 11-20, 2021
Center Stage Theatre, Kalamazoo	<i>All Together Now (MTI)</i>	Nov 12-14, 2021
Stagecrafters, Royal Oak	<i>R&H Cinderella</i>	Nov 12-Dec 5, 2021
Monroe Community Players	<i>All Together Now!</i>	Nov 12-14, 2021
Master Arts Theatre, Grand Rapids	<i>The Best Christmas Pageant Ever</i>	Nov 18-Dec 4, 2021
Old Town Playhouse, Traverse City	<i>The Savannah Sipping Society</i>	Nov 18-Dec 4, 2021
Farmington Players	<i>A Hunting Shack Christmas</i>	Nov 19-Dec 4, 2021
Grand Rapids Civic	<i>The Sound of Music</i>	Nov 19-Dec 19, 2021
Avon Players, Rochester	<i>It's a Wonderful Life, the Radio Show</i>	Nov 26-Dec 11, 2021
Holland Community Theatre	<i>Miracle on 34th Street</i>	Nov 26-Dec 11, 2021
Bay City Players	<i>Cole in your Stocking</i>	Dec 2-4, 2021
The Sauk, Jonesville	<i>Anne of Green Gables</i>	Dec 2-12, 2021
Center Stage Theatre, Midland	<i>She Loves Me</i>	Dec 3-12, 2021
Lebowski Center, Owosso	<i>Holiday at Lebowski</i>	Dec 3-12, 2021
Pit & Balcony, Saginaw	<i>Elf, the Musical</i>	Dec 3-12, 2021
Players Guild of Dearborn	<i>Music Revue</i>	Dec 3-12, 2021
Twin City Players, St. Joseph	<i>Elf, the Musical</i>	Dec 3-19, 2021
Players de Noc, Escanaba	<i>Talley's Folly</i>	Dec 3-11, 2021
Glen Arbor Players	<i>Enchanted April</i>	Dec 9-11, 2021
Northern Lites Readers Theatre, Cadillac	<i>A Christmas Melodrama & More</i>	Dec 11-12, 2021
Bay City Players	<i>A Tuna Christmas</i>	Dec 10-19, 2021
Community Theatre of Howell	<i>Elf, the Musical</i>	Dec 10-19, 2021
Grosse Pointe Theatre	<i>It's a Wonderful Life, the Radio Show</i>	Dec 10-19, 2021
Tawas Bay Players	<i>Christmas Songs & Stories (Free Concert)</i>	Dec 12, 2021
Clarkston Village Players	<i>Murder at Howard Johnsons</i>	Jan 7-22, 2022
Old Town Playhouse, Traverse City	<i>Disney's Frozen Jr. *</i>	Jan 14-23, 2022
Grand Rapids Civic	<i>Shakespeare in Love</i>	Jan 21-Feb 6, 2022
Stagecrafters, Royal Oak	<i>9 to 5</i>	Jan 28-Feb 20, 2022
Holland Community Theatre	<i>Agnes of God</i>	Feb 3-19, 2022
Avon Players, Rochester	<i>Little Shop of Horrors</i>	Feb 4-19, 2022
Bay City Players	<i>One Slight Hitch</i>	Feb 4-13, 2022
Pit & Balcony, Saginaw	<i>Guess Who's Coming to Dinner</i>	Feb 4-13, 2022
Farmington Players	<i>Tokens of Affection</i>	Feb 11-26, 2022
Northern Lites Readers Theatre, Cadillac	<i>Love Letters</i>	Feb 12-13, 2021
Master Arts Theatre, Grand Rapids	<i>Guess Who's Coming to Dinner</i>	Feb 17-Mar 5, 2022
Old Town Playhouse, Traverse City	<i>R&H Cinderella</i>	Feb 17-Mar 19, 2022

* indicates youth productions; ** indicates second stage productions, if submitted.

If your information is incorrect or missing, please send the correct information to [The Editor](#) to be corrected or included in the next issue.



Meet your new Board Members!



At the Annual Meeting, the following three members were elected to the CTAM Board. Two are brand new and President Michael Wilson will serve in that position for another year.



Greg Martini

“I am a third generation thespian and have been on stage since the age of three. Both my parents sat on boards for all of my childhood and through them I have been exposed to the back end of running a theatre from an early age. I attended Western Michigan University for theatre. Since then I have been on multiple community theatre boards and notably, I served as President at Ridgedale Players in Troy. I am currently with Stagecrafters in Royal Oak.

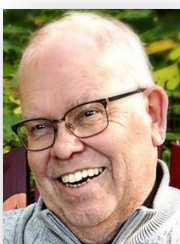
“By day, I serve our leadership team at my place of employment as our Human Resources Manager and understand the delicacies of navigating sensitive situations of all sorts. Believe it or not, I round out this experience with years of accounting, management and sales experience. I have been intensely involved with all sides of running a business at a high level: from front-end sales, to middle management, to back-end accounting.”



Sarah Salerno

Sarah has been involved in all aspects of theater but has found her home as the lead director of youth theater in Novi. It all started by soaking up being part of every production in her high school years. Then earning a BA in Communications emphasis Theater from Grand Valley State University. There she was given the opportunity to direct, costume, stage manage, and really deep dive into all things theater. You could always find Sarah in the Performing Arts Center working or collaborating on something.

After college, Sarah worked in several community theaters around the Grand Rapids Area and with IATSE Local 26, doing dressing for touring Broadway shows such as *Wicked*, *Grease* and *Shrek*. After a few years she moved to Novi to start her family and founded In The Mitten Productions. For the last six years, Sarah has enjoyed inspiring the youth of her community to fall in love with theatre just like she did. Her two boys have joined the productions and that has been the icing on the cake. Melding her love of theater and being able to include her family has filled her heart with so much joy.



Michael Wilson

Michael has been on the CTAM Board for the past three years and is also the current President of the board. He is the Prop master at Grand Rapids Civic Theatre and has been active among the Grand Rapids theatres for the past 28 years, working with Opera Grand Rapids, Circle Theatre, Grand Valley University, Aquinas Collage and Mason Street Warehouse. Michael believes that it is important that we give back to our various communities in return for the support they give us and has been very active in doing so and feels he has much more to offer going forward.



Monroe Community Players Start a Podcast!

One of the issues facing theaters during the COVID pandemic has been how to continue to reach out and even expand their audiences when large gatherings are discouraged. The Monroe Community Players (MCP) teamed up with their local Public Access Cable TV (MPACT) to help address this issue.

For a relatively small membership fee (\$200 annually) the Players gained access not only to a television studio but to a complete recording studio as well. One of the group's members, Brian Burchette-Ross who has a background in radio, suggested that the group start a podcast on a bi-weekly basis. A small group of volunteers was gathered and the podcast was underway.



Realizing that MCP is not the only community theatre with a podcast, they wanted to make their show a little different. So instead of focusing on only their upcoming productions, they decided to talk about the art and business of theatre with an emphasis on local and community theatre.

"We felt that nature of podcasting is such that our listeners may not be listening to each episode as it is posted," says MCP President and primary host of the podcast David Wahr. "They might binge several episodes at a time or take them out of chronological order, so it didn't make sense to us to promote any specific show as some do so we purposely set out to promote local the-



atre on a broad scale."

To keep the conversations lively and ensure diversity of opinions, it was also decided that each episode would have three or four participants. Just for fun they refer to themselves as the "Green Room Groupies" and, although there is a core group of four, others rotate in and out as needed to keep the recording sessions on schedule.

Topics such as character development, marketing, the use of social media, protecting children, and what shows are appropriate for community theatre have been covered so far and there is also plenty of good-natured joking between the groupies. "We've even got a series of running gags – including how often I've shaved my head to play Daddy Warbucks," Wahr says.

Wahr encourages other groups to consider their own podcast as well. "We hope that our efforts are helping to create a larger interest in community theatre. We make sure to mention the good work of other groups like CTAM and AACT, too. We want to make sure that people know that there's a large community of theatre enthusiasts out there and hopefully when they hear how much fun we have, they'll want to join in."

The Monroe Community Players podcast is currently available on iTunes and new episodes are posted about every two weeks.

Above left is the MCP Podcast Crew with Brian Burchette-Ross (center) and then (left to right) Ronald Roberts, Daveaux Riggs, and David Wahr.

Below are the Green Room Groupies (left to right): Brian Burchette-Ross, Robert Yoman, and Ronald Roberts.



The Scoop on Scripts

By Tara Western



Theatre is back! At the conference in Midland, an excellent town hall was very helpful. Most important message: CTAM is here to help. Visit the website **today!**

Every Christmas Story Ever Told (and then some!) is a delightful comedy, much in the vein of *Greater Tuna*. Written by Michael Carelton, James FitzGerald and John K. Alvarez, this three-actor romp was published by Playscripts in 2007.

Three actors take the audience on a wild ride from *A Christmas Carol* to *A Charlie Brown Christmas*. The play opens with Actor A in Dickensian dress, reading from a leather-bound volume of *A Christmas Carol*. Actor B, dressed as Marley's ghost, watches from the wings when Actor C, dressed as "The Ghost of Christmas Present", interrupts with a plan to perform something else, **anything else**, instead of *A Christmas Carol*. With the audience suggesting titles, the trio starts with *How the Grinch Stole Christmas*, segues into "Gustav the Green-Nosed Reindeer", who travels to *The Island of the Misfit Toys* and saves Christmas! Interwoven through the first act, are short "mis-informational" segments about Christmas in Iceland, Australia etc. Fruitcake gets its day in the sun with the "Fruit, Nut, and Dating Game". An audience member who will be called "Cindy" (all participating audience members are called "Cindy") joins the fun which includes a heated debate about whether Santa Claus is real or not. *The Gift of Maggie (Magi)* is performed leading into *A Charlie Brown Christmas*.

After a brief, hilarious Nutcracker ballet, Act II is a clever, hilarious mash-up of *It's a Wonderful Life* and *A Christmas Carol*.

The show ends with a sing-along of "Every Carol Ever Sung." Lots of popular culture, and local

references, which the playwrights encourage updating and personalizing. With three actors, lots of props and quick-change costumes, producing this show will be labor intensive for everyone. But what an exuberant romp!!!

Present Laughter by Noel Coward ©1949 is a light comedy in three acts, now published by Concord Theatricals. It is very British, obviously, and in my humble opinion, it needs to be performed with British accents. I know this is may be an obstacle for some groups.

The single set is the 1940s London studio of the extremely famous British actor, Garry Essendine. Five doors.....it is a farce. No special props, and fairly simple costuming, but the mid-1900's setting and sensibility will be motivating to your production crew.

Everyone wants a piece of Garry Essendine, with his rakish good looks and devil-may-care attitude. The play opens with Daphne, the first young woman who "lost her latchkey" last night. There have been many others. Monica, Garry's secretary, Fred, his valet, and Liz, his estranged wife try to protect him from the trouble that these dalliances lead to. Miss Erickson, the indifferent housekeeper adds a sense of normalcy, but is weary and judgmental.

Adding more complications: the beautiful Joanna is married to Hugo, Garry's agent, but another good friend, Morris, is besotted with her. Joanna wants Garry, not Hugo or Morris. Liz, the estranged wife, wants him to just "be unattractive for a minute or two." Garry's fling with Joanna threatens the long friendship among Garry, Hugo, Morris, Liz and Monica.

Throw in Roland Mule, a 25-year-old aspiring playwright who is also smitten with Garry and wants to worship at his feet. As Leeds Bird told me: farces thrive on awkward interruptions! Talk about awkward: Lady Saltburn returns with the love-sick Daphne. Noel Coward is wordy, so a skilled director and an energetic cast is a must. With a plethora of juicy roles, witty banter, sexual innuendo, people stashed in different rooms, (who does that except people in plays?) this show is lots of fun!

